

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of assigning resources to nodes in a workflow comprising:
 - defining a plurality of nodes, wherein said nodes are tasks to be executed within said workflow;
 - defining said resources for execution of said nodes;
 - storing a set of data items having variables pertaining to execution of said workflow; and
 - assigning said resources to said nodes for execution thereof in accordance with a set of rules, said set of rules for controlling the execution of said workflow.
- 15 2. The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said rules are based in accordance with an execution history of said workflow.
3. The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said rules are based in accordance with said set of data items.
- 20 4. The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said rules are based in accordance with time, wherein said time is relative to the execution of said nodes, and wherein said time is relative to the execution of said workflow, and wherein said time is relative to absolute time.

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5. The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said rules are based upon an event/action criteria and wherein said rules are based upon an event/condition/action criteria.

5 6. The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said rules are defined in accordance with a common language used for the entire workflow and used for assigning said resources to said nodes.

10 7. The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said resources executing said nodes are agents.

15 8. The method as recited in Claim 1 further comprises pre-computed authorizations, and wherein said authorizations are applied to said resources and wherein said authorizations are maintained in an up-to-date-manner, such that a set of authorized resources is easily retrievable concurrent with an initiated task.

9. The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein said rules are Boolean expressions.

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10. A computer system in a computer system network, said computer system comprising:

a bus;

a memory unit coupled to said bus;

a processor coupled to said bus, said processor for executing a method of assigning resources to nodes in a workflow, said method comprising:

- defining a plurality of nodes, wherein said nodes are tasks to be
5 executed within said workflow;
- defining said resources for execution of said nodes;
- storing a set of data items having variables pertaining to execution
of said workflow; and
- assigning said resources to said nodes for execution thereof in
10 accordance with a set of rules, said set of rules for controlling the
execution of said workflow.

11. The computer system of Claim 10 wherein said rules of said
method of assigning resources to nodes in a workflow are based in
15 accordance with an execution history of said workflow.

12. The computer system of Claim 10 wherein said rules of said
method of assigning resources to nodes in a workflow are based in
accordance with said set of data items.

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13. The computer system of Claim 10 wherein said rules of said
method of assigning resources to nodes in a workflow are based in
accordance with time, wherein said time is relative to the execution of said
nodes, and wherein said time is relative to the execution of said workflow,
25 and wherein said time is relative to absolute time.

14. The computer system of Claim 10 wherein said rules of said method of assigning resources to nodes in a workflow are based upon an event/action criteria and wherein said rules are based upon an
5 event/condition/action criteria.

15. The computer system of Claim 10 wherein said rules of said method of assigning resources to nodes in a workflow are based in accordance with a common language used for the entire workflow and
10 used for assigning said resources to said nodes.

16. The computer system of Claim 10 wherein said resources further comprises pre-computed authorizations, and wherein said authorizations are maintained in an up-to-date-manner, such that a set of
15 authorized resources is easily retrievable concurrent with an initiated task.

17. The computer system of Claim 10 wherein said resources executing said nodes are agents.
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18. The computer system of Claim 10 wherein said rules of said method of assigning resources to nodes within a workflow are Boolean expressions.

19. A computer readable medium for storing computer implemented instructions, said instructions for causing a computer system to perform:

- defining a plurality of nodes, wherein said nodes are tasks to be
 - 5 executed within said workflow;
 - defining resources for execution of said nodes;
 - storing a set of data items having variables pertaining to said execution of said workflow;
 - assigning said resources to said nodes for execution thereof in
 - 10 accordance with a set of rules, said set of rules for controlling said execution of said workflow.

20. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said rules are based in accordance with an execution history of said workflow.

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21. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said rules are based in accordance with said set of data items.

22. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said
20 rules are based in accordance with time, wherein said time is relative to
the execution of said nodes, and wherein said time is relative to the
execution of said workflow, and wherein said time is relative to absolute
time.

23. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said rules are based upon an event/action criteria and wherein said rules are based upon an event/condition/action criteria.

5 24. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said rules are based in accordance with a common language used for the entire workflow and used for assigning said resources to said nodes.

10 25. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said resources further comprises pre-computed authorizations, and wherein said authorizations are maintained in an up-to-date-manner, such that a set of authorized resources is easily retrievable concurrent with an initiated task.

15 26. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said resources executing said nodes are agents.

27. The computer readable medium of Claim 19 wherein said rules are Boolean expressions.